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REPORT OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL ON THE WORK OF ITS SIXTEENTH SESSION

Note by the Executive Director

The Executive Director circulates herewith, in provisional form, the report of the World Food Council on the work of its sixteenth session, held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 21 to 24 May 1990. The report will be issued in final form as Supplement No.19 to the Official Records of the General Assembly Forty-fifth Session (A/45/19).

For reasons of economy this document is produced in a limited number of copies. Delegates and observers are kindly requested to bring it to the meetings and to refrain from asking for additional copies unless strictly indispensable.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Administrative Committee on Co-ordination
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CILSS	Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EEC	European Economic Community
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GNP	Gross national product
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements: Habitat
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRO	Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNPAAERD	United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development
WFC	World Food Council
WFP	World Food Programme

PART ONE

MATTERS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL AT ITS SIXTEENTH MINISTERIAL SESSION

1. Under the Presidency of Dr. Youssef Amin Wally, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Land Reclamation of Egypt, we, the Ministers and plenipotentiaries of the World Food Council, met in Bangkok, Thailand, for the sixteenth session, from 21 to 24 May 1990. We reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the Cairo Declaration, which we had adopted at our fifteenth session last year, and discussed new steps for pragmatic action to meet the growing challenges to fight hunger and malnutrition in the 1990s.

2. In adopting the Cairo Declaration last year, we, the member nations of the World Food Council, committed ourselves to set an example for the rest of the world by putting into place effective policies and programmes to reduce hunger and malnutrition in our countries and at the global level. As a step in this direction, we reviewed our policies individually and took note of the findings of these reviews in regional consultations held in San José, Cairo, Bangkok and Paris between December 1989 and March 1990. Among the encouraging results from these consultations is the growing convergence in the perception of policy priorities among countries. Above all, there is now greater concern to make the improvement of the human condition a central objective of development, as we had stressed at our sessions in Beijing and Nicosia in 1987 and 1988.

3. Since our fifteenth session, important developments have been taking place in the international political and economic fields. Peace and disarmament efforts have continued, raising hopes that swords may finally be turned to ploughshares. Several countries consider that recent events directed at political reconciliation, such as the unification of the two German States and the two Yemen States, and the momentous changes in Eastern Europe, provide both opportunities and challenges for the improvement of the human condition in the world and an environment for peace and development in the framework of democracy and justice. The just-concluded Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on International Economic Co-operation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, has created an environment for improved international dialogue and economic co-operation and drawn attention to hunger and poverty as priority concerns of the world community. In this context, this Council's session reflects world political and economic changes. We, the members of the Council, believe, therefore, that the policy role of the World Food Council has become more important.

4. These and other developments give us reason to believe that the 1990s provide an historic opportunity to reverse the trend of growing hunger and jointly build a more equitable, just, peaceful world which will be a better home to live in for all people. To seize this opportunity, we must turn our energies fully towards the challenges ahead and apply our knowledge and resources more efficiently to the elimination of hunger. In our deliberations here in Bangkok, we have agreed to work together towards our common objective with an increased sense of urgency and have identified practical steps to ensure that this decade's opportunity will not be lost.

Hunger continues to waste human lives

5. At a time when the world is undergoing dramatic political changes which offer mankind the prospects for real peace and prosperity, the destruction and waste of human lives through hunger and malnutrition continue to grow. Against this cruel reality, we can derive little consolation from the fact that the world is now feeding 1.2 billion more people than at the time of the 1974 World Food Conference. Nor can we be satisfied by long-term trends of declining famine deaths, when the number of people threatened every year by starvation through man-made and natural calamities remains unacceptably high. We are especially concerned about the current sharp deterioration of the food situation in large parts of Africa and in other developing regions.

6. In the 1980s, the number of hungry people increased to some 550 million. Although the largest increases occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa, the majority of undernourished people are still to be found in Asia. The number of malnourished children also increased in the last decade, which in many countries saw a slow-down or a reversal of earlier progress in reducing child malnutrition and mortality. And nutritional-deficiency diseases have continued to take a heavy toll of ruined lives and lost productivity. Hunger, malnutrition and poverty are not the tragic privilege of the developing countries alone; they are also growing in parts of the industrialized world, despite continuing economic growth.

7. On the food production side, cereal output has fallen short of consumption for three consecutive years, leaving world stocks at the lowest level since 1981, just above the level of 17 per cent of global consumption, which FAO designated as the level necessary to keep minimum food security. Partly as a consequence, global food aid flows to low-income food-deficit developing countries declined in 1988/89 and have failed to recover so far.

8. The deterioration in the economic conditions in many developing countries in the 1980s has particularly affected the hungry poor. The persistence of economic problems, as a result of the application of internal policies and, especially, of external factors such as debt, as well as increases in real interest rates, falling commodity prices and trade protectionism, and the growing challenges of increasing populations and environmental degradation, cast a disturbing shadow on the prospects for reducing world hunger in the 1990s. But with a greater sense of common purpose, these challenges can be met.

Towards greater co-operative action by all countries in the 1990s

9. The primary responsibility for the elimination of hunger belongs to each country, but achievements will be greatest when countries work together. Our regional consultations demonstrated broadly-based agreement on the need in most countries for more human-centred development, backed by economic growth. But to serve the improvement of the human condition, economic growth must be achieved through broader participation of all people in the productive processes and a more equitable sharing of their benefits. We agree that growth patterns must be environmentally, economically, socially and culturally sustainable. Moderation of population growth is critical in those countries where it is too high to permit sustainable development. Within this framework, a more market-oriented economy, plays an important role in improving economic efficiency and as an engine to growth, by unleashing the productive energies of people.

10. Current trends of environmental deterioration, if allowed to continue unchecked sufficiently, will jeopardize the food security of future generations and, thus, the survival of us all. In this connection, we are particularly concerned about the global warming problem, caused by the "green house effect", as well as desertification and deforestation, and its impact on future world agricultural productivity. This problem can only be solved by the determined, joint efforts of all the countries and all the peoples of the world. While addressing the causes of the global warming problem, we must also be prepared to examine potential alternative agricultural production systems to respond to possible climatic changes as well as other environmental problems in different regions. In this regard, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Brazil in 1992, will be an important forum, for the preparations of which the members of the Council will seek to make a major contribution.

11. In this connection, Council members urge individual countries to take effective measures for the prevention of soil and environmental degradation, deforestation and desertification.

12. The members of the World Food Council welcome with satisfaction the Food Aid Sahel Charter adopted by the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Prevention in the Sahel (CILSS) Conference in February 1990, especially the provision concerning the utilization of counterpart funds generated by bilateral and multilateral food aid for development activities, particularly those having food security as their objectives.

13. There is a need for accelerating progress in the trade negotiations in the GATT Uruguay Round, including trade in agriculture. Members of the Council once again, as in earlier sessions, underline the importance of incorporating agriculture effectively into GATT rules and disciplines, in order to achieve, in the last decade of this century, a more just and open world trading system. Council members request the secretariat to report to their next session on the outcome of the agricultural trade negotiations of the Uruguay Round in relation to its food security implications and other aspects coming under the WFC mandate.

14. Given the growing convergence of our perceptions of objectives and the means to meet them, we, the members of the Council, can now move towards accelerated and more effective collaboration among ourselves and with all interested countries to implement identified priority activities within the Cairo Declaration's policy framework for the 1990s. In doing so, we are also looking to the continuing support of multilateral agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Action by developing countries

15. In Cairo, the Council members had agreed to make every effort to achieve, in the 1990s, four broad hunger-alleviation goals: the elimination of starvation and death caused by famine; a substantial reduction of malnutrition and mortality among young children; a tangible reduction in chronic hunger; and the elimination of major nutritional-deficiency diseases. Our policy review suggests that most countries have yet to set specific goals and targets in these four areas, and we call on them to do so urgently.

16. Country food strategies integrated in an overall human-centred development approach provide a framework for co-ordinated action in the areas

of food production, distribution, consumption and nutrition to meet these goals. Valuable experience has been gained with food strategies in the 1980s to guide improved efforts in the 1990s. The Council notes the willingness of the African Development Bank and several bilateral and multilateral donors to assist countries in further assessing their experience with a view to improving future policy design and implementation. These assessments should include an analysis of the role of the private sector in national and agricultural development strategies, and we request the secretariat to present a review of this to our seventeenth session.

17. The Council is also encouraged by the initiatives of the World Bank and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to provide food-security policy assistance to interested African countries. We call on these institutions to associate other international agencies and NGOs in these efforts, making full use of the complementary capacities and competence of various organizations. In this connection, we note with satisfaction the progress made by the Council's secretariat in advancing food-policy management training in Africa, and welcome the President's proposal to hold an interregional consultation next year on the food production challenges in the 1990s, which would gather representatives from Governments, private sector, research and funding institutions, together with concerned regional and international institutions, and non-governmental organizations.

18. Within the food-strategy framework, greater efforts will be needed to increase the productivity and incomes of small farmers and encourage them to adopt environmentally sustainable production practices; to promote rural and urban employment-generating policies and programmes; to implement more effective targeted food-subsidy and nutrition programmes; to promote measures in support of women, which take into consideration their needs and full contribution to the development process; to strengthen and build domestic institutions, with appropriate emphasis on private-sector and "grass-roots" institutions; and to strengthen national data collection and analytical capabilities to monitor, evaluate and plan progress towards hunger alleviation goals.

19. Our policy review points to the need for a greater integration of food strategies with macro-economic policies. In this connection, we emphasize the importance of integrating food-security and poverty-alleviation objectives into economic adjustment programmes to ensure not only that the food-security levels of low-income groups are protected during adjustment, but also that adjustment leads to long-term, sustainable reductions of hunger and malnutrition. We take note, with satisfaction, of the continuing consultations between the Council and the IMF directed at the improved understanding between the international financial institutions and Governments concerning the possible integration of food-security considerations in adjustment programmes. We are also encouraged by the continuing work of the Informal Group on the Impact of Economic Adjustment on Food Security and Nutrition, which is convened by WFC, UNICEF and ILO, gathering all relevant international agencies. We request that all these efforts be pursued further.

20. Raising agricultural production through increased productivity, together with improvements in distribution, processing and reductions in post-harvest losses, are central components of food strategies. Council Members call for the renewal of the Green Revolution.

21. This renewal would be based on a combination of existing knowledge and recent advancements in biotechnology coupled with regional integrated development programmes directed at facilitating the transfer of technologies

between the developed and developing countries and between the latter countries, and the dissemination of technologies among farmers by effective means of extension. Efforts would include strengthening support for existing national research institutions coupled with improvements in the interaction between national centres and the international network of CGIAR centres, and better co-ordinated bilateral and multilateral assistance in support of integrated national and regional research and development programmes. This would not only enhance food production and hence contribute to the elimination of hunger, but would also provide a framework for better co-operation among nations in the same region. Moreover, it would optimize the use of limited resources from donors, as well as the scarce natural resources available in developing regions.

22. As an initial step, we request the secretariat to prepare, in consultation with relevant agencies, for our seventeenth session, a review of ongoing national and international research and development and related training activities, including an assessment of the potential for extending the Green Revolution impact in Asia, for making greater use of existing technology in Africa and Latin America, and for a major technological breakthrough to feed the eight billion of us who will be here in the first 20 years of the next century.

Action by the developed countries

23. We, the members of the Council, note with satisfaction the efforts of developed countries to focus their development co-operation policies more sharply on hunger- and poverty alleviation, as evidenced in the December 1989 Policy Statement by ministers of co-operation and heads of aid agencies of the members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC). We recommend that the developed-country members of the Council undertake an assessment of how this greater hunger- and poverty focus is, in practice, being translated into country-specific aid programmes and projects, and how these actually affect the hungry poor, for consideration at the Council's seventeenth session.

24. At the same time, we are most concerned that developed countries' policy objectives are not matched by adequate resource support. In their December 1989 Policy Statement, DAC members acknowledge that the alleviation of hunger and poverty will require substantial additional aid efforts, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Current projections suggest that in the 1990s ODA growth rates will be below those achieved in the 1980s, and that the aid effort in the 1990s will thus be relatively less rather than substantially more, unless developed countries take the necessary steps to reconcile their resource commitments with policy objectives.

25. We call on the developed-country members of the Council to implement the undertakings they have made to attain the international target of devoting 0.7 per cent of GNP to official development assistance. In full solidarity with the peoples of Eastern Europe, which are carrying out radical economic reforms, we urge that co-operation be extended to them, but not at the expense of developing countries. In this regard, we are encouraged by the statements of a number of developed countries that they will at least maintain ODA flows to developing countries.

26. While calling for increased aid flows, we also emphasize the overriding importance of improving the overall economic environment, including more effective approaches to the debt problem, increased non-ODA resource flows to the developing countries, through trade liberalization and better terms-of-trade and private investments.

Improving co-ordination of national and international action towards a more concerted attack on hunger

27. Following our call last year for better co-ordinated efforts to fight hunger and poverty, we reviewed co-ordination issues at the national and international level, with emphasis on the agencies of the United Nations system. In our regional consultations, developing countries emphasized that co-ordination of external assistance is primarily the responsibility of the developing countries themselves and would be facilitated by better co-ordination of their domestic activities. Many of them expressed the desire to receive external assistance for improving their management capacity in order to better co-ordinate both domestic and external action to reduce hunger. Developed countries at the Paris consultation confirmed their readiness to assist.

28. Our review of co-ordination issues in the United Nations system points out that the activities of some 35 international agencies are significantly related to hunger problems. While these agencies are engaged in various food-security related fields, few focus sharply on hunger alleviation. The greatest co-ordination problems persist at the country level and it should be noted that international agencies still are typically perceived to compete excessively. In the light of the growing complexity of hunger and poverty problems, the role of the World Food Council in providing a central, undivided focus on hunger within the United Nations system is now more important than at the time of its establishment 16 years ago.

29. Council members agree to encourage an enhanced hunger focus and improved co-ordination between all relevant international agencies and governing bodies. Council members welcome the proposal endorsed by the United Nations Secretary-General for the creation of an inter-secretariat consultative mechanism among the four Rome-based food organizations. The Council members also request the World Food Council President and Executive Director to consult with the executive heads of the concerned agencies and the United Nations Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation in this regard.

Action in other areas of the Cairo Declaration

30. In the context of the Cairo Declaration's emphasis on South-South co-operation, we note with satisfaction the adoption, by UNDP, of the "Umbrella Project for the Promotion of Regional and South-South Co-operation in the Food and Agriculture Sector" and the steps taken for its implementation.

31. Having heard the Executive Director's oral report on the follow-up to our Cairo proposal for an international agreement on the safe passage of emergency food aid to people affected by civil strife, war and natural disasters, we, the members of the Council, request that he further consult with all concerned institutions on the development of guidelines for more effective measures to ensure the safe passage of emergency food aid, and recommend that the United Nations Secretary-General consider seeking the support of the General Assembly, at its forty-fifth session, for drawing up an international draft agreement.

32. As part of our efforts to raise the level of political support for the eradication of hunger and malnutrition, we request the Council members belonging to the Group of the seven most industrialized countries to bring the results of our Bangkok deliberations to the attention of the Group's next

summit meeting to be held in the United States in July 1990. We also agree to promote hunger- and poverty alleviation and the improvement of the human condition as central development objectives in the forthcoming United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (Paris, September 1990), the World Summit for Children (New York, September 1990), and in the negotiations to formulate the United Nations International Development Strategy for the 1990s.

33. Council members reiterate the role of the World Food Council in co-ordinating the range of issues identified for ongoing and further action. We emphasize the importance of the World Food Council in collaborating with the relevant United Nations agencies in order to avoid duplication and maximize the effectiveness of limited resources.

34. We, the Ministers and plenipotentiaries of the World Food Council, have agreed to report on progress in the implementation of the above recommendations in our countries to our seventeenth session.

PART TWO

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

1. The sixteenth ministerial session of the World Food Council was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 21 to 24 May 1990. It was opened by the President of the Council, Mr. Youssef Amin Wally, Deputy Prime-Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt and Minister for Agriculture and Land Reclamation, in the presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand. A message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations was read by the Executive Director, Mr. Gerald Ion Trant. Her Royal Highness delivered the inaugural address.

A. Membership of the Council

2. At the time of the session, the Council comprised the following 36 States:

Argentina,*** Australia,** Bulgaria,* Burundi,*** Canada,* Cape Verde,** China,* Côte d'Ivoire,* Cyprus,** Democratic Yemen,*** Denmark,*** Ecuador,** Egypt,*** France,*** German Democratic Republic,** Germany, Federal Republic of,** Guatemala,** Hungary,*** Indonesia,* Iran, Islamic Republic of,*** Italy,*** Japan,*** Madagascar,* Mexico,* Niger,** Paraguay,** Peru,*** Rwanda,*** Syrian Arab Republic,** Thailand,* Turkey,* Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,** United States of America,* Uruguay,* Zambia,* and Zimbabwe.**

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* Term of office expires on 31 December 1990.
** Term of office expires on 31 December 1991.
*** Term of office expires on 31 December 1992.

B. Attendance

3. The session was attended by the following member States of the Council: Argentina, Australia, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Egypt, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Japan, Madagascar, Mexico, Rwanda, Thailand, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America, Uruguay, and Zambia.

4. Observers from the following States non-members of the Council were present: Angola, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Chile, Congo, Ethiopia, Finland, Gabon, Greece, Holy See, Israel, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritania, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Philippines, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Sweden, Tunisia, Uganda and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

5. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies were represented: ESCAP, Habitat (UNCHS), UNICEF, UNDP, UNEP, WFP, FAO, IFAD, ILO, IMF, UNIDO, WORLD BANK and WHO.

6. Observers from the following intergovernmental organizations were present: EEC (Council of Ministers and Commission of the European Communities), Islamic Development Bank, and Organization of African Unity.

7. Observers from the following non-governmental organizations were also present: International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage, Lutheran World Federation.

C. Officers

8. The following officers of the Council were present:

President : Mr. Youssef Amin Wally (Egypt)

Vice-Presidents: Mr. Charoen Kanthawongs (Thailand)
Mr. Yovtcho Roussef (Bulgaria)

D. Agenda

9. The Council adopted the following agenda (WFC/1990/1) for the session:

1. Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda.

2 The global state of hunger and malnutrition - 1990 report.

3. Translating the commitment of the Cairo Declaration into action: priorities and requirements in the years ahead

   A. Additional and more effective measures by Governments to alleviate hunger and poverty;

   B. Action by developed countries to assist developing countries in their fight against hunger;

   C. Improving co-ordination of national and international action towards a more concerted attack on hunger.

4. Report on WFC follow-up action.

5. Bureau changes

6. Other business

7. Report of the Council to the forty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly

E. Documentation

10. The documents before the Council at its sixteenth session are listed in the Annex to the present report.

II. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

A. Opening statements

11. The President of the Council, Mr. Youssef Amin Wally, opened the sixteenth session, expressing appreciation that the opening ceremony was honoured by the presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, and thanking the Kingdom and people of Thailand for their generous hospitality.

12. The 1980s had been termed "a lost decade for development" for many developing countries. In Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean, both absolute and relative hunger and poverty had increased substantially. Even in Asia, where flexible adjustment to a changing international environment had resulted in economic gains, the number of hungry and malnourished people appeared to have grown over the decade.

13. Unless an unprecedented effort was made at the national and international level, this grim picture could only worsen. In the decade to come, and in the framework of human-centred development strategies, there must be a more decisive approach to food production, and a long-overdue vastly improved access to food by the poor. These challenges will need to be met against a background of increased population pressure and with an active concern for the protection of the environment.

14. The President stressed, however, that the international community need not accept growing hunger as an inescapable fate. He reminded the assembly of the Council's earlier emphasis on the man-made nature of the hunger problem and the adequacy of the financial, technical and human resources necessary to resolve it. Since the Council met in Cairo last year, there had been historic changes in the political configuration of the world, but these developments did not of themselves meet the immediate needs of hungry people. The President therefore urged World Food Council Ministers to make themselves heard and identify the political recommendations which could stimulate Governments, international organizations and non-governmental groups to press for a world which would more aggressively fight against one of the greatest shames of this century.

15. In a message read on his behalf by the Executive Director of the World Food Council, the Secretary-General of the United Nations observed that the Declaration adopted at the recent Special Session of the General Assembly on international economic co-operation was a solemn commitment to realizing the basic right of all human beings to a life free from hunger, poverty, disease and fear. Eliminating hunger, the Secretary-General noted, is inextricably linked to the process of development in all its aspects, including the overwhelming pressures of population growth and environmental degradation.

16. The Secretary-General referred to the Cairo Declaration's Programme of Co-operative Action, which provided a set of political, economic and social measures which could serve as a useful common framework for effective action. He stressed the necessity of making better use of the world's human resources and available technologies and improving access to food for the millions of people who are still in dire need.

17. The Secretary-General appealed to Ministers to take advantage of this session of the World Food Council to address the challenges ahead, in order to ensure that the next century starts with a population not deprived of a decent life.

18. In her inaugural address, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn expressed appreciation of the World Food Council's efforts to assist the poor and hungry. Her Royal Highness noted that participants at this sixteenth session were gathered out of a shared conviction and ideology that the joint efforts of both developed and developing nations would help construct a world free of hunger and malnutrition for future generations. The strength for this must come from a mutual determination to not only provide temporary relief but to eliminate the causes: the economic, social and political systems that create and perpetuate human suffering.

19. Her Royal Highness expressed her belief that we are all answerable to every poor and hungry person, whose well-being should be placed at the centre of our conscience and of our efforts. The goal of alleviating hunger and malnutrition, Her Royal Highness believed, was not totally out of sight and it was her sincere wish that we might enter a twenty-first century where the basic needs of people would no longer be denied.

20. Thailand's Minister of Agriculture and Co-operatives, Major General Sanan Kajornprasart, welcomed delegates and conveyed to them the best wishes of his Government. He was confident, he said, that the conference would result in practical solutions for the reduction of world hunger and poverty. Thailand had itself learned a number of lessons which it could share with others. A pattern of development which emphasized industrialization with a strong agricultural base, and an outward-looking trade policy, had resulted in strong economic growth in recent years. While a dynamic and productive agricultural sector was at the core of this development, said the Minister, experience had shown that there must be efforts to maintain the correct balance between the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, and that growth could not be at the expense of the environment. Thailand had taken difficult policy decisions and resisted strong political pressures in its determination to protect its natural resources, but the benefits were now clearly established.

21. The Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Co-operatives of Thailand, and Vice-President of the Council, Mr. Charoen Kanthawongs, welcomed delegates to the sixteenth ministerial session. He spoke of his own ministerial concerns, many of them centred on maintaining Thailand as the food basket of Southeast Asia, to satisfy the ever-growing demand for food in the increasingly populous developing countries of the region.

22. Vice-President Kanthawongs reminded the delegates that, as well as exchanging personal experiences, the meeting was to review the policies and programmes which member countries of the Council had adopted in accordance with the concept of "human centred" development and identify more effective measures to combat hunger and malnutrition. He hoped that the session would also identify concrete actions to enhance co-operation among countries and agencies. He stressed that solutions were a joint responsibility, but appealed to developed countries to assist the efforts of developing countries.

B. General debate

23. The President of the World Food Council introduced the general debate, recalling that, in adopting the Cairo Declaration last year, member states of the Council had committed themselves to putting in place effective policies and programmes to reduce hunger and malnutrition, nationally and globally. He noted that it was appropriate that the Council's discussions were taking place in Thailand, a country which had achieved significant progress in a number of those areas which the Cairo Declaration had identified as crucial to the improvement of the human condition.

24. The President reported that the conclusions and recommendations of the Council's fifteenth ministerial session, embodied in the Cairo Declaration, had received the strong support of the forty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly, and had received support in a number of international fora: the Summit of Industrialized Countries in Paris; the Organization of African Unity Summit of Heads of State and Government; the Ninth Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Countries; the Arab League Conference and the Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference. The elements of the Declaration had also received the support of the Regional Commissions of the United Nations, OECD, agencies of the United Nations system, and the international NGO community.

25. Recalling the Cairo Declaration's emphasis on the need to raise the level of national and international political support for the elimination of hunger and malnutrition, the President drew attention to a number of important recent international developments. The just-concluded Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly had cited the eradication of hunger and poverty as a major challenge of the next decade, a concern to be translated into feasible policies and programmes when formulating the United Nations International Development Strategy for the 1990s. The Council secretariat had been involved in the preparatory process for the Strategy, and the President urged Council members to take an active role in the forthcoming negotiations. In September 1990, two important meetings would provide an opportunity to put the eradication of hunger and malnutrition on the international policy agenda: the Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held in Paris, and the World Summit for Children, which would take place in New York. The President called on Council members to represent the Council's priority concerns at both.

26. Having outlined the challenges and indicated the areas for decision which Ministers at the session would have to address, the President expressed his confidence that the sixteenth session would result in decisions for co-operative action that would make this world a better place in which to live.

1. The global state of hunger and malnutrition - 1990 report

(Agenda item 2; WFC/1990/2)

27. Following the practice begun at its thirteenth session, in Beijing, the Council began its session by reviewing the global state of hunger and malnutrition. The report before Ministers this year set out the global situation against a background of four goals agreed upon in Cairo, i.e: achievement, in the 1990s, of the elimination of death and starvation

resulting from famine; a substantial reduction of child malnutrition and mortality; a tangible reduction of chronic hunger; and elimination of the major nutritional-deficiency diseases.

28. Ministers noted that, in spite of substantial food-production gains over the past 30 years, global food security remained uncertain. In the last few years, fewer than half the developing countries had increased their per caput food production. Despite some increase over 1988 harvests, global production of staple foods in 1989 fell below consumption levels for the third successive year. As a result, in 1989/90, cereal stocks were once again drawn down and world food security appeared dependent on uncertain current harvests.

29. Nevertheless, global food production remained adequate to feed the world's people, but Ministers expressed concern that the number of the undernourished now exceeded 500 million.

30. Most recent estimates showed that more than 100 million people in Africa suffer from chronic food insecurity. Although most of those affected live in Sub-Saharan Africa, the problem extends to the whole continent. In absolute terms, however, the 600 million poor people living in Asia outnumbered those in all other regions, despite the substantial reductions in hunger and malnutrition in China during the 1980s.

31. Ministers also looked at the different manifestations and concentrations of hunger and malnutrition within the overall figures. It was noted with concern that famine, although less frequent than in earlier decades, continued to take its heavy toll. Particularly disturbing were the re-emerging famine conditions in Ethiopia and Sudan and the severe food-emergency situations in Angola and Mozambique, where drought, unrest and civil war had wrought havoc. Rwanda's famine in the wake of recurring natural disasters since 1988 reminds us that the food security of many people is fragile.

32. Most of the hungry were still to be found in rural areas, but urban poverty had increased, most rapidly in Latin America. Women and children continued to be the most food-insecure and impoverished. The decade had seen the numbers of malnourished children grow, with a loss of momentum in some of the earlier progress made towards eliminating child mortality and malnutrition. Hunger and malnutrition-related diseases claim the lives of 40,000 children every day. Nutritional-deficiency diseases such as deficiencies of iodine, iron and Vitamin A have yet to be eliminated, in spite of the comparatively modest cost involved of doing so. The food insecurity of refugees and the connection between malnutrition and war or civil strife were highlighted.

33. Hunger and malnutrition are the children of poverty. And by failing to address them effectively, we are responsible for their continuance. Unfavourable international economic conditions, foreign debt, low international commodity prices and trade protectionism, together with land- and environmental degradation, were underlined as particular contributors to the declining food-production growth rate in many developing countries. Ministers repeatedly emphasized that hunger and poverty were inextricably intertwined with both environmental degradation and population growth, the pressures of the latter placing significant limits on the effectiveness of domestic policies in fighting hunger.

2. Translating the commitment of the Cairo Declaration into action: priorities and requirements in the years ahead

(Agenda item 3; WFC/1990/3, and Adds. 1 to 3, WFC/1990/4, WFC/1990/5)

34. In his Introductory Statement the President recalled that, among the commitments which Council members had undertaken in Cairo, was a review of their policies for reducing hunger and malnutrition, both domestically and globally. The results of these reviews, which had been shared at regional consultations in San José, Cairo, Bangkok and Paris, had indicated a number of opportunities and directions for early progress in the reduction of hunger. Related proposals for action by developing countries, developed countries and international agencies were before Ministers at this session.

35. The President drew particular attention to one of the most encouraging signs to emerge from the regional consultations of Council members: the growing convergence between developing countries' perceptions of specific priorities, and the evolving co-operative priorities of developed countries. The consultations had revealed growing determination to establish the improvement of the human condition as a central objective of development. More attention is being given to poverty alleviation; food security and adequate nutrition; as well as investment in human resources, including education and training, basic health care, and fuller participation of people in the development process, with particular emphasis on the role of women. Further, a stronger political determination to address the difficult problems of population growth and environmental degradation is emerging. The President felt that this developing convergence offered a major opportunity for accelerated and more effective action to reduce hunger in the 1990s.

36. Ministers were unanimous in viewing the Cyprus Initiative and the Cairo Declaration as solid bases for effective policies to fight hunger and poverty. There was broad understanding and agreement on what should be done and where effort should be focused and Ministers, therefore, urged early or accelerated concrete action within the framework of the commitments already undertaken. Improvement of the human condition, growth with equity, and priority attention to the question of access to food were identified as key to a fundamental solution of the hunger and poverty problem. Ministers stressed, however, that the battle against hunger and poverty required above all a good measure of international solidarity and a strengthening of international co-operation.

(a) Additional and more effective measures by Governments to alleviate hunger and poverty

37. An encouraging degree of consensus regarding immediate and longer-term priorities for the elimination of hunger and malnutrition had been noted by the President. Discussions reflected this.

38. It was observed that, in 30 years' time, the world's population would exceed 8 billion. Most of the increase would be in Asia, followed by Africa and Latin America. Dramatic increases in food production would be needed to feed them. Ministers stressed that, particularly in low-income, food-deficit countries, increased food production was a pre-condition to the resolution of the hunger and malnutrition problem. It was recognized, however, that increases in food supplies could be achieved only if investment in agricultural infrastructure was stepped up, institutions strengthened, modern

technologies and farm-management practices adopted and improved physical inputs applied. In addition, delegates expressed concern that the share of investment to agriculture was too low in many developing countries to permit the scale of production increases needed. The stepping-up of both private and public investment was called for, but a number of delegates cautioned that there was also a need to enhance investment productivity and cost-effectiveness. Many delegates suggested that massive increases in production would be possible only following further advances in science and technology, and a number suggested that the prospects for and feasibility of a second Green Revolution should be explored.

39. Delegates agreed unanimously that the development process must increasingly take into account the needs of the poor. Multi-level, equitable, human-centred development policies must be implemented, in order to counter earlier neglect and distribute benefits more fairly.

40. Many delegates stressed that those agricultural policies and programmes which focus on the small farmer are doubly effective; simultaneously raising incomes of the poor and increasing agricultural output. Agricultural extension services and research institutions should be geared to serve small and marginal farmers and rural women, who form the backbone of rural development in many developing countries. Better food-storage facilities, agricultural diversification, stable prices and regional specialization were seen as essential to the food security of the poor. Disparities in the size of land holdings and insecure and exploitative tenurial arrangements were also seen as factors which limited the equitable distribution of resources, discouraged production and inhibited access to food. Comprehensive agrarian reform was recommended.

41. It was emphasized that special attention should be given to the creation of employment- and income-earning opportunities for both the rural and urban poor. Complementary measures would be investments in social services and special measures for the most poverty-stricken areas, including investments in infrastructure and social institutions.

42. The important role which food subsidies and direct nutrition interventions could play in the immediate alleviation of hunger and malnutrition was recognized. It was agreed, however, that careful targeting to those most in need, especially women and children, was essential. The proven effectiveness of integrating nutrition programmes with other social interventions such as family planning and health care was also taken note of. The importance of programmes to eradicate nutritional-deficiency diseases was stressed. Such programmes are low cost, administratively feasible and offer the possibility of early progress in one of the areas pinpointed for focus by the Programme of Co-operative Action cited in the Cairo Declaration.

43. Parallel with such short-term measures, the ground should be prepared for longer-term policy change. In this context, a number of delegates stressed the desirability of strengthening national food strategies, both financially and institutionally. Some felt that improved data collection and monitoring could both facilitate design and enhance implementation of such strategies; others placed a high value on the setting of hunger-reduction targets and the necessity of monitoring, to assist realistic planning and meaningful evaluation.

44. The developing countries' special interest in safeguarding the environment was underlined by Ministers and by a number of intergovernmental, multilateral and non-governmental organizations. Action to eradicate hunger

and malnutrition should not be at the expense of longer-term efforts directed at securing sustainable development. The relationship between food security and the environment was repeatedly emphasized. Soil degradation and desertification, which compromised productivity and aggravated the problems of hunger and poverty, were mentioned as areas of particular concern. It was stressed that economic development and sound environmental policies "must go hand in hand".

45. The discussions on the environmental problems which faced many developing countries gave rise to a proposal from the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was seconded by the Representative of Democratic Yemen, that countries set up national funds for the prevention of soil erosion, environmental degradation and desertification, supported by international organizations, donor countries and non-governmental bodies. The World Food Council was asked to consult with international agencies in this regard.

46. The concern that hunger- and poverty considerations be integrated into the design and implementation of structural adjustment programmes was emphasized by both developed and developing countries. Signs that the international financial institutions were, increasingly, sharing such concerns were viewed positively. However, it was noted that the success of adjustment was often prejudiced by an international environment which hurt the economies of developing countries.

47. In the context of discussions on individual and national food security, a number of delegates noted the potentially supportive role of regional food security and the scope for enhancing this with both intra- and interregional co-operation. As a vehicle for upgrading the respective weaknesses and sharing the individual strengths of collaborating partners, regional and South-South co-operation had not yet been fully exploited. Early warning and food-information networks, regional food reserves, agricultural research, environmental protection and pest control, exchange of technology and human-resources development were areas which lent themselves to new initiatives or further efforts.

48. A keen interest in regional co-operation was expressed by African Ministers, who noted that this could be fostered by regional country groupings, as demonstrated by the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC). Such regional groups could provide a useful focus for assistance from development agencies and donors, whose financial support to regional projects in agricultural research and training, livestock production and disease control, fisheries, forestry, and wildlife and soil and water conservation could greatly contribute to the achievement of regional food security.

49. Many delegates from developed countries affirmed their willingness to continue promotion of regional and South-South co-operation and, in this regard, the potential of tripartite co-operative agreements was noted.

(b) Action by developed countries to assist developing countries in their fight against hunger

50. Ministers from developing countries recognized that sound economic policies and measures to fight hunger and poverty were primarily a domestic responsibility. They emphasized that an improved international economic environment and stepped-up donor support were also important, while measures

to relieve the debt burden of developing countries, trade liberalization and improved terms of trade, together with increased financial and technical assistance, were viewed as essential. A number of Ministers expressed concern at the decrease in ODA over the 1980s and the prospects for a lowered rate of increase in DAC-ODA. Increased efforts towards achieving the aid target of 0.7 per cent of GNP were urged by many developing-country delegates.

51. While appreciating and acknowledging the importance of development aid, a number of developed countries confirmed that they could not foresee substantial increases in total ODA levels; only a few were presently increasing aid levels substantially, although, as was pointed out, the 0.7 per cent aid target had already been passed by some countries.

52. While applauding the recent political developments in Eastern Europe, delegates from some developing countries expressed their concern that this could lead to a diversion of aid flows. Ministers from developed countries, as well as the EEC, confirmed that such fears, while understandable, were unfounded. They assured the developing countries that assistance to Eastern Europe would not be at the cost of ODA. In addition, it was pointed out that developing countries would benefit from the recent developments in Eastern Europe, which were enhancing economic co-operation, leading to greater efficiency and stimulating international trade.

53. Several delegates from developed countries stressed that improvements in the quality of aid; trade; and non-ODA, particularly private investment, were more important than increased levels of ODA in helping the economies of developing countries. A number of developing countries emphasized the importance of renewed flows of private investment and indicated that they were actively promoting same.

54. Developed-country Ministers noted that hunger and poverty were already being given greater attention in development co-operation. They indicated that, while the first responsibility for focusing on human-centred development rested with the developing countries themselves, they were supporting those broad-based growth strategies which they considered prerequisite for such development. Many noted that they were giving high priority to agricultural and rural development and it was observed that, for the long term, the first priority in the Lomé IV Convention was rural/agricultural development. The role of women in agricultural development was also being given increased attention by a number of countries. Food aid and assistance to food strategies and food-security programmes were features of many countries' aid packages and, in this connection, reference was made to the recent activities of FAO and the World Bank, and to the Food Aid Charter in the framework of CILSS.

55. There was consensus on the need for a successful and balanced outcome of the Uruguay Round. It was recognized that this was indeed the last opportunity this century to remove distortions in international trade in agricultural products, while taking into account the need for "special and more favourable treatment" of the developing countries. While some countries expressed concern over the possible negative effects of trade liberalization on net food importers, the longer-term benefits were stressed by many. It was suggested, however, that the secretariat report to the next session on the outcome of the agricultural trade negotiations of the Uruguay Round in relation to its food security implications and other concerns within the World Food Council's mandate.

56. The representative from IFAD drew attention to the critical importance of enhancing the flow of concessional resources to countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, to help them intensify efforts to address the acute problems of poverty and hunger. In this context, IFAD appealed to industrialized countries, and others in a position to do so, to contribute to the January 1991/December 1993 Phase of IFAD's Special Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa.

57. The African Group called upon regional and international financial institutions to provide aid in kind and agricultural inputs to the African countries, and invited the international community to support the concerned United Nations organizations with additional resources, thus permitting them to strengthen their agricultural-project management and implementation capacities, and to take advantage of the field experience of such institutions as FAO.

58. The Minister from Democratic Yemen reminded the Council of the unification of the two Yemen States and urged the international community to provide the support appropriate to allow the new State to improve food production for the benefit of its poor and vulnerable groups.

(c) Improving co-ordination of national and international action towards a more concerted attack on hunger

59. Increasing awareness of the complexity of the hunger problem, and the practical difficulties which had become evident with the growing number of international agencies engaged in the areas of food security and hunger alleviation, had prompted Council Ministers in Cairo to call for a renewed emphasis on proper co-ordination of these efforts.

60. Ministers observed that one of the principal functions of the World Food Council was the co-ordination of hunger- and poverty-related activities. They expressed the hope that the Council's efforts in addressing the growing need for co-ordinated action in the fight against hunger would match its acknowledged success in keeping hunger issues high on international agendas. The informative analysis (Document WFC/1990/5) of the activities of the large number of international bodies and organizations dealing with hunger and poverty pointed out the urgency of enhancing co-ordination between the relevant international organizations at national and international levels.

61. A number of the efforts of international organizations in the areas of food security, agricultural research and nutritional-deficiency disease elimination were cited as examples of co-operation. These include the food-security related arrangements of FAO and the World Bank, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the FAO/WHO/UNICEF Inter-Agency Food and Nutritional Surveillance (FNS) Programme. Nonetheless, it was felt that there was much more scope for improving co-ordination between United Nations agencies. As informal co-ordination mechanisms within the United Nations system appeared to have worked generally better than some of its official bodies, it was suggested that a shift from bureaucratic co-ordination to goal-oriented collaboration might be appropriate. On the other hand, it was thought that a regular, rather than the current ad hoc, association of the Council with the work of the United Nations Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) could well facilitate the Council's co-ordination role in the fight against hunger.

62. The consultations which had taken place between the Managing Director of the IMF and the Executive Director of the World Food Council, and the subsequent senior-staff-level discussions, were considered a good beginning for improved collaboration in the spirit of the Cairo Declaration. A proposal that the four food agencies based in Rome establish an inter-secretariat consultative mechanism was brought to the attention of delegates.

63. The most serious co-ordination difficulties were seen to be at country level, and it was felt that the approaches and activities of the international agencies were often competitive. There was wide recognition that the developing countries carried the major responsibility for internal co-ordination of development activities. Many countries appealed for assistance in upgrading their co-ordination capacity, and it was agreed that particular efforts should be directed towards this end, with developed countries and agencies expressing their willingness to offer support in this regard. However, a number of delegates stressed that there was considerable room for improvement in co-ordination within and between bilateral as well as multilateral agencies, and regular consultations between recipient countries and donors were essential to enhance the effectiveness of resource flows and ensure complementarity of efforts.

3. Report on WFC follow-up action

(Agenda item 4; WFC/1990/6)

(a) WFC support to African food policy and strategy efforts: human resources development through training in food policy management and analysis

64. Following Ministers' request at their fifteenth session, the secretariat had continued its efforts to promote food policy management and analysis training in Africa, in the framework of UNPAAERD. Through consultations with interested developed-country universities, a number of bilateral agencies, international organizations and African regional institutions, the secretariat had advanced discussions and a number of African institutes were ready to incorporate this innovative training into their curricula.

65. Ministers expressed appreciation of these activities in the area of human resources development to support African food-policy and food-strategy efforts (see conclusions and recommendations, paragraph 17).

66. In accordance with Ministers' wish that the Council continue its efforts to promote food strategies in Africa, the secretariat had initiated preparations for a review of food strategy experience in selected African countries. A number of bilateral donors had expressed interest in assisting such a review and the African Development Bank had already earmarked resources for this purpose.

67. As reflected in paragraph 16 of the conclusions and recommendations, the Council requested the secretariat to bring forward work in this area and to present the results of the review to the seventeenth session.

(b) Regional and South-South co-operation in the food and agriculture sector

68. The President reported that the "Umbrella Project for the Promotion of Regional and South-South Co-operation in the Food and Agriculture Sector" had been adopted by UNDP in July 1989. The secretariat had continued its activities in promoting South-South food-technology exchanges and the improved harmonization of food and investment policies. In the former area, consultations were ongoing with UNDRO. In the latter connection, the President announced his intention of calling an interregional consultation of developing countries early in 1991.

69. The adoption of the "Umbrella Project for the Promotion of Regional and South-South Co-operation in the Food and Agriculture Sector" was noted with satisfaction. The hope was expressed that this trilateral co-operation, involving the participation of international organizations and developed countries, would be beneficial in the promotion of science and technology exchanges between developing countries and would also effectively combine South-South co-operation with North-South co-operation.

70. The Council welcomed the President's proposal to hold an interregional consultation next year on the food production challenges in the 1990s (see conclusions and recommendations, paragraph 17).

(c) Food-security-focused adjustment programmes

71. The secretariat had continued its activities in this area, both through the WFC/UNICEF/ILO Informal Group of Multilateral Agency Representatives on the Impact of Economic Adjustment on Food Security and Nutrition in Developing Countries and through consultations with the International Monetary Fund. Following the Council's emphasis on explicit incorporation of long-term policy objectives for food-security and poverty alleviation into the design of structural adjustment programmes, the Informal Group had discussed this theme at its fourth meeting in Rome in January 1990.

72. The Council felt encouraged by the continuing work of the Informal Group and requested that these efforts be pursued further (see conclusions and recommendations, paragraph 19).

(d) Safe passage of emergency food aid

73. Ministers at the fifteenth session had accepted in principle the proposal for an international agreement on the safe passage of emergency food aid and the need to protect the most vulnerable groups from the effects of civil strife, war and natural disasters.

74. The WFC Executive Director informed the session of activities since Cairo to advance the proposal for an international agreement, noting that such an agreement would constitute an important step towards realizing one of the four hunger-alleviation goals of the Cairo Declaration, the elimination of starvation and death caused by famine. He reported on informal consultations held with FAO, UNDRO, UNHCR, WFP and the Office of the United Nations Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation. The Executive Director also noted that the WFC proposal could contribute to a number of other international efforts, including the recommendations contained

in United Nations resolution A/43/131 of December 1988, and the activities to be undertaken in the 1990s within the framework of the International Decade for Disasters Reduction.

75. The Executive Director said that while some NGOs had expressed concern during the past year that a formal international agreement might reduce their ability to deal with crises flexibly and pragmatically, he felt that there were good reasons to continue to examine the issue. In particular, it was his view that a new international agreement could help avoid long delays in case-by-case negotiations.

76. In addition to the development and negotiation of an international agreement, the Executive Director suggested as an area for further work the further study of practical ways to ensure safe passage in the absence of such an agreement. He suggested that the Council might wish to call on UNDRO and WFP to jointly mobilize all relevant institutions, within and outside the United Nations system. He urged Council members to participate in this work, and asked the Council to request that a report be presented to the seventeenth session.

77. Finally, he suggested that the Council request the United Nations Secretary-General to propose, when reporting on humanitarian assistance to the 45th session of the General Assembly, the drawing up of a draft international agreement, seeking instructions from the General Assembly to proceed.

78. The Council requested that the Executive Director consult with all concerned institutions on the development of guidelines for more effective measures to ensure the safe passage of emergency food aid (see conclusions and recommendations, paragraph 31).

4. Bureau changes

(Agenda item 5)

79. In accordance with the decision of the Asian Group at the Bureau elections which took place at the fifteenth ministerial session, the Council confirmed by acclamation the election of Mr. Andreas Gavrielides, Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources of Cyprus, as Vice-President of the Council for the Asian States, succeeding Mr. Charoen Kanthawongs, Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Co-operatives of Thailand, from the end of the sixteenth ministerial session to the end of the present Bureau mandate.

5. Other business

(Agenda item 6)

80. There was no other business before the Council, and no further business was raised during discussions.

III. REPORT OF THE COUNCIL TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

A. Organization of work

81. The Council met five times in plenary session. Its conclusions and recommendations to the General Assembly were prepared by a drafting group consisting of two representatives from each regional group, and were adopted by acclamation in the plenary. The members of the drafting group were: Cameroon, Canada, France, German Democratic Republic, Japan, Mexico, Thailand, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay and Zambia.

B. Future programme of work

82. The Ministers decided that the Council's future programme of work would be as determined in the conclusions and recommendations of the sixteenth ministerial session (Part One of the present report).

C. Expression of gratitude to the Government and people of the Kingdom of Thailand

83. The following expression of gratitude to the Government and people of the Kingdom of Thailand was adopted:

The World Food Council,

Having convened its sixteenth ministerial session in Bangkok, Thailand, from 21 to 24 May 1990, at the kind invitation of the Royal Thai Government,

1. Expresses its deep appreciation to the Kingdom of Thailand, "the land of smiles", for the hospitality and warm welcome extended to all Ministers, plenipotentiaries and other representatives and observers participating in the session;

2. Applauds the Government and people of the Kingdom of Thailand for the excellent conference facilities and other arrangements provided to all participants;

3. Requests the President of the Council to express, on behalf of all the members and observers participating in the session, its deep gratitude to the Government and people of the Kingdom of Thailand.

84. Representatives of the five regional groups and the representative of the EEC paid warm tribute to Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, and to the Government and people of the Kingdom of Thailand for their generous hospitality in hosting the session.

ANNEX

List of documents before the Council at its sixteenth ministerial session

Document No.	Agenda item	Title
WFC/1990/1	1	Provisional agenda with annotations
WFC/1990/2	2	The global state of hunger and malnutrition - 1990 report
WFC/1990/3	3A	Additional and more effective measures by Governments to alleviate hunger and poverty
WFC/1990/3/Add.1	3A	Report of WFC Regional Consultation, Latin America & the Caribbean, San Jose, Costa Rica, 5-6 December 1989
WFC/1990/3/Add.2	3A	Report of WFC Regional Consultation, Africa and Western Asia, Cairo, Egypt, 22-23 January 1990
WFC/1990/3/Add.3	3A	Report of WFC Regional Consultation, Asia, Bangkok, Thailand, 1-2 February 1990
WFC/1990/4	3B	Action by developed countries to assist developing countries in their fight against hunger
WFC/1990/5	3C	Improving co-ordination of national and international action towards a more concerted attack on hunger
WFC/1990/6	4	Report on WFC follow-up action
WFC/1990/7		Current world food situation
WFC/1990/8		Report of the fifteenth session of the Committee on World Food Security